

**DELIGHT AND MEDITATE**

## Psalm 1

**Intro:** If you were here last Sunday, you will remember that in examining Psalm 1 we learned that it is the will of God that we be happy. But it is even more than that because the word “blessed” in verse 1 speaks not only of happiness, but much happiness, multiplied happinesses, a life characterized by God-given joy. And immediately the Psalmist pointed out that the way most people seek happiness, does not make them truly happy. There may be some momentary pleasure in things which are sinful in God's sight, but such pleasure is not true pleasure. Moses realized this when, even though he was brought up in Egypt as a member of the Pharaoh's family, with all of the wealth and prestige that he would have enjoyed, yet this is what we read of a major decision that he made when he became an adult:

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward (Heb. 11:24-26).

Most people would have thought that he was crazy to make such a choice, but the words “by faith” at the beginning of this paragraph in Scripture, indicates that he had come to know the Lord, and that his eyes had been opened to the emptiness of the world in its wisdom, its power, and its glory. When Stephen, the church's first martyr, was delivering his answer to his accusers, he reminded them that “Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds” (Acts 7:22). But that was probably where Moses saw how bankrupt even mighty Egypt was when it came to producing real joy and peace and hope. It must have been that the time that Moses' mother had him as a child, she sowed the Word of God in his heart, and under the blessing of God he was never able to forget God's Word. And he knew that the Word of God held the answer to man's needs, and that the wisdom of men was nothing in comparison.

So I trust that we have all learned that there is a great difference between the wisdom of men and the wisdom of God. And today, thirty-five hundred years after Moses, most men are still trying to make something out of their own wisdom, while having no place in the lives for the Bible

which contains the wisdom of God.

So let us all take notice: We can walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and we can stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of the scornful, but none of that produces true happiness. Human psychology is bankrupt itself, and always has been, and always will be. It is the truth of God and the truth about God that we need, and that can only be found in the Bible, the Word of God.

So it is a great relief in reading Psalm 1 when we get down to verse 2. True happiness is not found in living according to verse 1, but according to verse 2. (Read.)

This morning I want to emphasize two words with you, and I trust that none of us will ever forget them. There are other words that are of great importance in this Psalm, but they will only be meaningful if we learn and practice the ideas that are in these two words: “delight” and “meditate.” Let us take the word “delight” first.

### **I. “DELIGHT” (Psa. 1:2a).**

“But his delight is in the law of the Lord.” Who was the Psalmist talking about when he said, “his,” “his delight”? Well, he was talking about “the man” of verse 1, the one who is truly happy. So let’s put together the first words of verse 1 with verse 2: “Blessed is the man” whose “delight is in the law of the Lord.”

That word “delight” is a very important word because for all of us there is something that we delight to do. That which we delight in, is that which pleases us more than anything else. It is that which we like to do. You hear of people who never miss a home game of the Trailblazers. Those people spend hundreds of dollars on tickets because they delight in basketball. There have been many men whose marriages have been ruined because they delight in making money – and they neglect their wives and children because money is the god they serve.

All of us ought to take plenty of time to ask ourselves, “What is it that brings me the most pleasure? If I could spend my life doing all of the time that which I like to do the most, what would it be? Or if I could have anything that I want, what would I want to have?”

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Or let us think of it in this way: All of us had, or still have (depending on our age), things that our parents wanted us to do. How much of it did we do because we *delighted* to do what would please our parents, or did we do what they wanted us to do because we had no choice, we had to do it?

But the Psalmist here was talking about “the law of the Lord,” an expression which we can now apply to all of God’s Word. What do you do with your Bible when you go home from church? Do you put it some place where you will know where it is so you can get it out and bring it to church next Sunday, or do you read it each day? And if you read it each day, do you really *delight* in reading it? Do you look forward to those times in the day when you can read it? Would you say that reading the Word is your chief joy? Are you planning on memorizing the book of Colossians with us because you want your mind and heart to be saturated with the Word of God?

When you think about it for a moment, this statement, “But his delight is in the law of the Lord,” or in the Word of God, is really a measure by which we can test where we are spiritually. Of course you are not going to delight in the Word if you are not saved. That must come first. But if you are saved, but cannot say that you delight yourself in the Word, then something is very wrong in your life! You are passing up that which will determine if you are going to find the happiness that God wants you to have.

One Psalm I love to read is Psalm 119. And I love it because it just speaks of the Word of God over and over – 176 verses which concentrate on God’s Word. I wish we had the time to read it together this morning. The person who wrote Psalm 119 was a person who knew what it means to delight himself in the Word of God. And one of the many wonderful things he said about the Word was this: “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day” (v. 97). Another is: “Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” (v.105). And yet another is this: “Great peace have they which love thy law: And nothing shall offend them” – or make them stumble. That is verse 165.

It is in reading the Word that we learn about God, that we learn about ourselves. It is there that we see what our real needs are, and what God has done to meet our needs. God has given us many precious promises which are recorded permanently in His Word. In the Word we learn how to pray, and how God wants us to live, and how to serve the Lord.

Job was a man who really delighted in the Word. One of the things he said about the Word was this:

11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food (Job 23:11-12).

He meant that the Word of God was more important and valued more than the food that was essential to his life.

Jeremiah delighted in the Word because he wrote concerning the Word, Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts (Jer. 15:16).

This verse bring me to the second words that I want to emphasize with you. It is the word “meditate.”

## II. “MEDITATE” (Psa. 1:2b).

If I were to ask you what it means *to meditate*, most of you would tell me that it means *to think* – and you would be right. It means that when we read the Word of God, we are not just to read so that we can say we have read the Bible for that day, or so we would be able to say that we have read the whole Bible by the end of the year. It is good to have a goal like that, but the important thing for us to do as we read is *to think about what we are reading*. This is what Jeremiah meant when he said that he *ate* the word of God. And this is what the Apostle Peter had in mind when he wrote,

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2:2-3).

Many have likened meditation to what a cow is doing when it chews the cud. It brings up into its mouth again the food that it has eaten, to chew it a second time so it can be digested. If you just go back and read a verse over a second time, that is getting started on meditation. If you commit a verse to memory, that is a great form of meditation because you are forced to think about every word in the verse. Underlining a verse in your Bible is an aid to meditation. If you look up the cross references for any verse, that is meditating. The word implies also that which we express when we talk to ourselves.

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To see how a particular word is used in other passages of Scripture, is an excellent way to meditate. For example, in the first verse of Psalm 2 we have this same word which is translated “meditate” in Psalm 1:2, only in Psalm 2:1 it is translated “imagine.” But it means to meditate. The heathen were meditating on “a vain thing.” What was it? Verses 2 and 3 tell us. (Read.) What is the Lord’s response? See verses 4 through 6.

We all meditate. We all think. We all plan. But any thinking, any meditating, that runs contrary to the Word, is a waste of time. But thinking about the Word, praying for understanding of the Word, reading and re-reading the Word, is the most profitable thing that we can do. And if we truly delight in the Word, we are going to meditate on it. When the Psalmist said, “day and night,” he didn’t mean that we don’t do anything else, but he meant that thinking about the Word of God was continually on his mind.

So it is really true that the more we read the Word, and think about what we read, seeking our understanding from the Spirit of God, and looking to Him to enable us to obey the Word, the greater our happiness will be. Those things which are sinful in God’s sight never contribute to our happiness, but to our unhappiness. Oh, that we would really believe this, and then that we would obey it. There are so many things in this world that can make us unhappy, but it is the Word that brings us true joy – as Jeremiah indicated even though he lived in most trying times.

Matthew Henry had a good word on this subject of meditation:

To meditate in God's word is to discourse with ourselves concerning the great things contained in it, with a close application of mind, a fixedness of thought, till we be suitably affected with those things and experience the savour and power of them in our hearts. This we must do day and night; we must have a constant habitual regard to the word of God as the rule of our actions and the spring of our comforts, and we must have it in our thoughts, accordingly, upon every occasion that occurs, whether night or day. No time is amiss for meditating on the word of God, nor is any time unseasonable for those visits. We must not only set ourselves to meditate on God's word morning and evening, at the entrance of the day and of the night, but these thought should be interwoven with the business and converse of every day and with the repose and slumbers of every night.

But this is not all that Psalm 1 tells us. People live in either one of these ways, or the others. And there are two results.

### III. THE TWO RESULTS.

First let us take:

#### A. The one who delights himself in the Word (Psa. 1:3).

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” This word can mean not only “planted,” but *transplanted*. This is what we are by grace, the grace of God. God has transplanted us by our salvation, and we are by “the rivers of water,” another figure of speech pointing to the Word of God. And the Word makes us fruitful. It keeps our leaves green, which indicates a healthy tree, and we are promised continual prosperity. This does not mean a life free from trouble, but it speaks of the continual blessing of the Lord.

The trouble with many who profess to be Christians is that they are like children, “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14) – not like trees!

What about the others?

#### B. The ungodly sinners (Psa. 1:4-5).

The ungodly are not like fruitful trees, but like worthless chaff “which the wind driveth away.” They may “stand in the way of sinners,” but they “shall not stand in the judgement,” nor will they be found “in the congregation of the righteous.” How tragic to have spent your whole life defying God and living in sin, only to find that there is a judgment to come when all men will stand before a holy God.

Verse 6 gives us:

### IV. THE CONCLUSION (Psa. 1:6).

On the statement, “the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,” Matthew Henry had this to say:

God must have all the glory of the prosperity and happiness of the righteous. They are blessed because the Lord knows their way; he

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chose them into it, inclined them to choose it, leads and guides them in it, and orders all their steps.

So to know our way means that He fully approves of it, and is pleased to identify Himself with us. So said Derek Kidner, p. 49.

Adam Clarke had this to say about this first part of verse 6:

Ps 1:6

Such holy men are under the continual eye of God's providence; he knows the way that they take; approves of their motives, purposes, and works because they are all performed through himself. He provides for them in all exigencies, and defends them both in body and soul.

“But the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

One writer said, “So the two ways, and there is no third, part forever” (Kidner, p. 49).

**Concl:** There is today, and there always has been, a strong rejection of the Word of God. God always has His elect who love the Word and live by the Word, but the masses of the people are on the other side. But it is still true that God’s blessing now and glory to come always rests with those who delight in His Word, and who spent their lives meditating on the Word that they might live in a way pleasing to God. Which side are you on – the man described in verse 1, or the man described in verses 2 and 3? The world would pressure us to stay in verse 1 where we were born. God has given us His Word that we might hear what He has to say, and then turn to Him through His Son that we might be like trees transported into eternal life. May God enable us to hear His voice today and give ourselves to Christ and to live according to the Word. The rest of the Psalms emphasize the message of Psalm 1.